

here at home and meet other important obligations. But right now, Mr. Speaker, our priorities are completely distorted. We are sacrificing the lives of our troops in a morally reprehensible war that is fiscally reckless and strategically an epic, historic failure. After 10 years, it's time to bring our troops home, make the change we so desperately need.

Embrace and adopt the principles of SMART Security.

TEXAS LEGISLATURE CALLS ON CONGRESS TO PASS BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, in the last few weeks as I traveled across my district, the 24th District of Texas, it became very obvious to me that the number one issue on the minds of my constituents is out-of-control Federal spending.

In the last legislative session in Texas, my former colleagues in the Texas legislature passed a resolution addressing this out-of-control Federal spending. The resolution requested that the Congress pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution and send it to the States for ratification.

This is the resolution I have in my hand that was sent to me by the State representatives and the senators in my district that I represent. By overwhelming votes in both houses, the house and the senate, the Texas legislature passed this resolution that I'm holding right here in my hand. The Texas House of Representatives approved this bill by a vote of 115-17 on April 13, and the Senate adopted the bill on May 19 by a vote of 28-3.

This resolution calls on Congress to enact the best measure to stop runaway Federal spending. We can best ensure our future prosperity by passing a balanced budget amendment. I would like to personally thank the members of the Texas legislature that represent parts of my district, the 24th District of Texas. I applaud them for sending this resolution urging us to take action. My sincere thanks go to State Senator Jane Nelson, State Senator Chris Harris and State Senator John Carona, and to State representatives Vicki Truitt, Burt Solomons, Linda Harper-Brown, and Todd Smith. These brave men and women have taken a courageous stand on this issue, and I feel it's my obligation to follow through with their request.

The Federal Government must end sustained deficit spending. In fiscal year 2010, the Federal Government accumulated a deficit in excess of \$1.3 trillion, an annual deficit that exceeds the entire gross State product of Texas. In order to finance our current deficit, we borrow 40 cents of every dollar we spend—40 cents on the dollar—money that could easily go to pay our national debt down.

The longer we wait only results in more debt, debt that we will pass along to our children and to our grandchildren. Our national debt currently stands at \$14.7 trillion, which equals a debt per taxpayer of \$131,288. This is a problem we can no longer ignore.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Texas legislature's request for prompt passage of a balanced budget amendment.

THE STATE OF TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 18

Whereas, the gravity of federal debt and federal obligations was established early in American history, with deficit occurring only in relation to extraordinary circumstances, such as war; yet for much of the 20th century and into the 21st, the United States has operated on a budget deficit, including the 2010 budget year, which surpassed an astounding \$1.3 trillion, an annual deficit that exceeded the entire gross state product of Texas; and

Whereas, the federal debt is greater than \$14 trillion, a sum that if shared equally by each person in America would be a burden of over \$45,000 per person, and yet the federal government continues to accrue debt; and

Whereas, the higher the deficit, the more the government must spend on paying interest on the debt; compounding the problem is the use of deficit spending, which becomes a responsibility for future generations of Americans to assume without their consent; and

Whereas, Congress has attempted to set budgetary restraints for itself in the form of a balanced budget amendment; the proposal won wide support in 1995, failing by only one vote in the senate; and

Whereas, many states have previously requested that Congress propose a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, but Congress has proven to be unresponsive; and

Whereas, this growing burden of public debt is a threat to the nation's economic health, and action must be taken to restore fiscal responsibility; a balanced budget amendment would require the government not to spend more than it receives in revenues and compel lawmakers to carefully consider choices about spending and taxes; by encouraging spending control and discouraging deficit spending, a balanced budget amendment will help put the nation on the path to lasting prosperity; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the 82nd Legislature of the State of Texas hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to propose and submit to the states for ratification an amendment to the United States Constitution providing that except during a war declared by the Congress of the United States pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 11, United States Constitution, or other national emergency, the total of all federal appropriations for a fiscal year may not exceed the total of all estimated federal revenue for that fiscal year and providing for a spending limitation; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Texas Secretary of State forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

UNDERAGE DRINKING AND FTC WE DON'T SERVE TEENS INITIATIVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the topic of underage drinking. It is an issue that challenges every generation of public officials, parents, educators, law enforcement, industry members, and concerned citizens. But through bipartisan leadership and almost three decades of public and private effort, our Nation has made some substantial progress. I mention "bipartisan" because it was President Reagan who teamed up with Democrats in Congress to enact the National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984.

□ 1050

At the signing ceremony, the President's remarks are a great lesson in federalism and national leadership that remains very important today. He said that underage drinking is a problem that is "bigger than the individual States." He called underage drinking a "grave national problem" that "touches all our lives." President Reagan concluded, "With the problem so clearcut and the proven solution at hand, we have no misgiving about this judicious use of Federal power."

I said that this was a bipartisan effort. Our colleague from the other body, Senator LAUTENBERG from New Jersey, was instrumental in guiding the measure through Congress, and he continues to be a forceful advocate for young people today.

According to the National Highway Safety Administration, the number of fatalities in teen drunk driving crashes has declined 74 percent since the early 1980s. Studies from the Department of Transportation and Government Accountability Office indicate that the 21-year-old drinking age has saved tens of thousands of lives. Most government measures of underage drinking have also declined.

Parents, educators, and other adults who have influence on young people need to recognize that older teens are still capable of making youthful mistakes, and some of these mistakes can be fatal. We should not do anything that allows our young people to obtain alcohol before they reach the legal drinking age. We need to remain involved in their lives and do everything we can to encourage and insist that they make responsible decisions.

Back in 2006, our colleague LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD led the effort to enact the Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act, better known as the STOP Act. The law established a framework for cooperation among Federal agencies with responsibility to address underage drinking. In mid-July, we received a report from the Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee that was formally established by the STOP Act. It documents Federal Government prevention initiatives across

17 agencies, including the Federal Trade Commission, which created the We Don't Serve Teens program as a public education and outreach initiative.

The 2011 launch of We Don't Serve Teens occurred last week in Chicago and throughout the Nation. One purpose of the We Don't Serve Teens initiative is to inform parents and all adults that teen drinking is not inevitable. Crown Imports and MillerCoors, the number two and number three American beer suppliers, are both headquartered in the district I represent in Chicago. Both companies have supported the We Don't Serve Teens program since it began in 2006.

I am pleased that these two companies have joined the FTC, Members of Congress, Chicago officials, and thousands of concerned citizens to support We Don't Serve Teens. We need everyone at the table. Industry members have a unique ability to reach out directly to local stores, bars, restaurants, and other places where alcohol is served.

The We Don't Serve Teens message is reinforced. I commend these efforts. I especially commend the distributors of these alcoholic beverages in their effort to make sure that teens handle alcohol responsibly. The best way is to not drink at all.

POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the founding member and a cochair of the Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus. The 42 members of the caucus work every day to ensure that we meet our economic and, yes, our moral obligation to the most vulnerable across this Nation—those people facing or living in poverty.

Yesterday, the United States Census Bureau released data showing that 2.6 million more Americans fell into poverty, making it 46.2 million people living in poverty in America. This is the highest number since the Census Bureau started keeping these records in 1959. Fifteen percent of Americans lived in poverty last year. The poverty rate among African Americans in 2010 was 27.4 percent; for nonwhite Hispanics it was 26.6 percent; for Asian Pacific Islanders it was 12.1 percent; and for non-Hispanic whites it was 9.9 percent.

Digging deeper into the disparities, the data reveals that the real median income declined for white and black households between 2009 and 2010. Real median income for each race and Hispanic-origin groups have not recovered to the pre-2001 recession all-time highs.

According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, the Census data reveals that both the number and percentages of people living in deep poverty hit record highs, meaning that some 20.5 million Americans had cash

incomes below \$11,000 for a family of four. In addition, the Census reports that the median household income fell 2.3 percent, or \$1,100, in 2010.

Those at the bottom of the income scale have lost far more ground than those at the top. Income inequality continues to grow at alarming rates. We know that this crisis is even worse in communities of color.

The national average of children living in poverty in America is 20 percent. That's outrageous. For African American children, it's 36 percent; for Latino children, it's 31 percent. That's hard to believe. The median net worth of white families in 2009 was 20 times greater than that of the average black family, and 18 times greater than the average Hispanic family.

These are not just statistics. These are real human beings who deserve an opportunity to live the American Dream, which to our dismay, unfortunately, has turned into a nightmare for millions. So the Out of Poverty Caucus cochairs, Congressmen BACA, BUTTERFIELD, CONYERS, HONDA, and myself, sent a letter to the President asking him to address our Nation's job crisis, which is a national emergency, through a bold package of direct investment which is aimed at our Nation's most vulnerable—those facing or living in poverty. We asked that he consider including programs like the TANF Emergency Contingency Fund, which gets money out of the door across the country efficiently and effectively, and it puts people to work. We asked for job training at communities affected by the Great Recession, which of course is the depression for these communities, and we asked for programs that will help train and put our Nation's young people to work.

We are pleased and thankful that in the President's jobs bill he did embrace some of our suggestions, including building on programs like the TANF Emergency Contingency Fund and on the job training, youth employment, extension initiatives, and extending unemployment compensation, but we also still believe that unemployment compensation must be extended to those who have exhausted their benefits after 99 weeks until we create these jobs, because there are four individuals looking for one job. After 99 weeks, these individuals are no longer eligible for unemployment compensation. So we're asking that H.R. 589 be considered, which is a bill by Congressman BOBBY SCOTT and myself, to extend this unemployment compensation by 14 weeks. That's the least we can do.

Make no mistake about it, people are suffering. Children don't have enough to eat. People want and need jobs, as we saw during the Congressional Black Caucus' very important and successful jobs tour and the Congressional Progressive Caucus' Speak Out for Jobs Now tour. People want our economy to grow, but they know that they need a job to do this.

Our country needs full employment for people to turn the economy around.

More and more people are falling into poverty than ever before—from all walks of life and educational backgrounds.

The Out of Poverty Caucus will continue to sound the alarm about the growing crisis of people living in or facing poverty. I want to remind everyone that many middle-income people are on the verge of falling into poverty. As we say, many are one paycheck away from poverty. It is critical that America returns to the land of opportunity for all.

□ 1100

STOP MILITARY RAPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as I have done virtually every week, to tell a story of a man or a woman in the military who has been raped. Nineteen thousand are raped every year in the military. Only 13 percent report the rapes because there has been such an ineffective addressing of this issue. So today, I rise again to tell another story.

I hear from victims who have been sharing their stories with me by emailing me at stopmilitaryrape@mail.house.gov. It is time for us to act. We have known of this problem for over 16 years. We have had 18 hearings and reports on this issue, and yet nothing changes.

So today I'm going to tell you about Darchelle Mitchell, an airman. And she writes: "I never thought that I would be a victim of such a horrible and traumatic event, nor did I believe that it would occur under the blanket of freedom I swore to fight for. I decided to serve my country as an example for my two boys and to do my share to better my Nation."

"In my first year, I began to accept the unwanted comments of my shape, size and looks as though it was part of something to deal with when working and living with men on a ship. It escalated to the uncomfortable motions by a superior trying to pull me into a two-manned rack that was in the office. I reported the incident to my immediate supervisors requesting that they speak with him, and the responses were always that the superior meant no harm and that he was just being playful. This led to my superior grabbing me by the top of my head and pushing it into his genital area, stating, 'I bet I can make you say 'oh, God.''"

"After the reporting of this incident, I suffered the backlash of being blackballed. My job assignments became very difficult, and I bounced around from command to command until someone was willing to take the chance to allow me to perform as an airman trying to advance."

"I worked very hard to remove the negative light that was cast upon me. I went on to advance to a dual-qualified